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PRESS RELEASE

USAID Awards a Two-Year Cooperative Agreement Project to Address Food Security in Kyrgyzstan

The USAID Central Asia Region (CAR) Mission awarded the **International Center for Soil Fertility and Agricultural Development (IFDC)** a new, two-year Cooperative Agreement, effective September 1, 2008, valued at \$1.7 million to extend the Kyrgyz Agro-Input Enterprise Development Project (KAED).

The new project extension will encourage Kyrgyz farmers to adopt practices that will increase food production, animal health, and rural incomes. The project will operate in the North and the South of the country and will build on long-established relationships with the Association of Agribusinessmen of Kyrgyzstan (AAK), other associations and local service providers, government agencies, and USAID and other project partners.

The objective of the project is to improve food security in 2009 and 2010 by:

- Increasing productivity in the cultivation of wheat - the major staple food, and
- Improving livestock feed and dairy cow care to reduce the loss of vital livestock in the winter and to increase milk production.

The project will devote about 2/3 of its efforts to increasing wheat harvests by organizing a market-oriented process for distributing improved varieties of wheat seeds financed by USAID and possibly other donors, providing technical assistance and public outreach to farmers on improved techniques for wheat production, and helping establish more farm stores to increase farmer access to inputs. To enhance livestock health and productivity, the project will undertake a program to improve corn yields and alfalfa feed, promote better techniques for the care and feeding of dairy cows, and make veterinary vaccines, medicines and information more available through the farm stores.

KAED is one of the many programs funded by USAID. Since 1992, the American people through USAID have brought over \$1.5 billion to the five republics of Central Asia, in programs that assist education, healthcare, economic growth, and democratic institutions.